



NEWS RELEASE

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MEMBERSHIP OF LANDMINES CONVENTION GROWS ON FIRST DAY OF NAIROBI SUMMIT: SUMMIT PRESIDENT WELCOMES RATIFICATION BY ETHIOPIA

Nairobi – Ethiopia has become the 144th state to accept the Ottawa Convention banning anti-personnel mines. The announcement came on the first day of the 29 November – 3 December Nairobi Summit on a Mine-Free World.

“I am ecstatic that on the first day of this historic event one of the world’s most mine-affected states has joined the effort to end the suffering caused by anti-personnel mines,” said Summit President, Ambassador Wolfgang Petritsch of Austria.

“Ethiopians can now look forward to a brighter future without the terror of landmines,” said Ambassador Petritsch, noting that Ethiopia will now destroy its existing stockpiles of anti-personnel mines within four years, clear mined areas within ten years, and cease any use, production or transfer of the weapon immediately.

“Every state in Sub-Saharan Africa except Somalia has now accepted the Ottawa Convention’s comprehensive solution to the humanitarian catastrophe caused by anti-personnel mines,” said Ambassador Petritsch. “In addition, I have great hope that Somalia will soon join this global movement given as the new Somali Prime Minister has confirmed that he will attend the Nairobi Summit.”

Nairobi Summit is the first five-year review of the 1997 Ottawa Convention. At the Summit, the international community is expected to adopt a powerful action plan to address challenges that remain on the path towards a mine-free world. Heads of state and ministers of foreign affairs from several countries are expected to address the Summit’s high level session on 2-3 December.

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Note:

- The draft *Nairobi Action Plan, 2005-2009* and other Summit documents can be found at: www.reviewconference.org/draft_documents
- A list of key media opportunities at the Summit is available at: www.nairobisummit.org/press
- A B-roll of rights-cleared, broadcast quality video footage of anti-personnel mines, mine survivors, mine clearance, stockpile destruction and Ottawa Convention-related diplomatic images is available to interested media representatives.